

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

FY 2017 Study of the U.S. Institutes for Scholars

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAAE-17-008

Office of Academic Exchange Programs

Study of the U.S. Branch (ECA/A/E/USS)

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Notification of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued by the Office of Academic Exchange Programs, Study of the U.S. Branch, for the FY 2017 Study of the U.S. Institutes for Scholars. Proposals must conform to the NOFO, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the NOFO, the NOFO is to be the dominant reference.

I. STATEMENT OF WORK

In a cooperative agreement, the Study of the U.S. Branch is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. The Branch may request that the recipient make modifications to the academic residency and/or educational travel components of the program. The recipient will be required to obtain approval of significant program changes in advance of their implementation. These activities and the roles and responsibilities of the Department and your organization are outlined below.

A. Award Recipient Responsibilities:

1. Designing, overseeing, and implementing one six-week FY 2017 Study of the U.S. Institute for Scholars;
2. Providing programmatic and administrative oversight of the Study of the U.S. Institute;
3. Coordinating logistical and administrative arrangements for participants such as pre-departure information, airport pick-up and drop-off, lodging and meals, domestic travel, any medical treatment, and the disbursement of program funds;
4. Providing syllabus and program calendar for the Institute;
5. Providing participants with follow-on guidance and resources and facilitating continued interaction among participants and U.S. scholars after the conclusion of the Institute;
6. Conducting an evaluation program that links outcomes of the Institutes to stated program goals and objectives to ensure that all Institutes meet comparable and high levels of quality in fulfilling program goals;
7. Informing and consulting with ECA about any program or participant problems, emergencies, or other issues as well as the progress of necessary corrective action;
8. Managing ECA and other funds for this activity, including submitting required quarterly and final financial reports to ECA as well as weekly updates to the program office during the Institute; and

9. Providing reasonable accommodations for participant needs, including disability accommodations if needed, in support of ECA's commitment to diversity and the involvement of participants from traditionally underrepresented audiences (see budget template for guidance).

B. Department of State Responsibilities

1. Providing advice and assistance to the award recipients and Institute staff including final approvals of key project plans and activities;
2. Coordinating all communications with participating U.S. embassies, consulates, and Fulbright commissions, including the recruitment and selection of participants;
3. Issuing participant DS-2019 forms for this program and issuing the participants' J-1 visas;
4. Enrolling the participants in an accident and sickness health benefits program for the duration of the Institutes and issuing health benefits identification cards for each participant. The program office will instruct the award recipient how to access informational brochures and claim forms;
5. Arranging and purchasing international round trip travel for participants and disbursing international travel allowances prior to departure to the United States;
6. Monitoring the Institutes through regular communication with the award recipients and host institutions and possibly one or more site visits; and
7. Conducting a formal debriefing session with the participants during their Washington, D.C. visit.

II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

A. Overview

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State invites proposal submissions for the design and implementation of three six-week Study of the U.S. Institutes for Scholars on American Politics and Political Thought, Contemporary American Literature, and Religious Pluralism in the United States. Study of the U.S. Institutes for Scholars are designed to strengthen curricula and improve the quality of teaching about the United States in academic institutions overseas. Each Institute should provide a diverse group of educators and professionals with a cohesive academic program in the selected theme that includes a four-week academic residency component and up to two weeks of an integrated study tour to another region of the United States. Proposals should present a creative, thematically coherent program that draws upon institutional strengths, including faculty and other resources, and upon recognized scholars and other experts from throughout the United States. In addition to the academic focus of each Institute, the program should introduce the foreign scholars to the history and evolution of U.S. culture, society and values, and should allow participants to interact with a diverse group of Americans. The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for this competition gives further direction on the substance of the program.

All aspects of the programs, including presentations and other class work such as: readings, research assignments, and site visits, should be integrated to highlight the overall Institute theme and contribute to the understanding of the United States. The conception and structure of the Institutes are the responsibility of the award recipient. It is essential that proposals provide a full, detailed, and comprehensive narrative describing how the recipient and/or host institutions will achieve the objectives of the Institutes. A tentative academic

program, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc. should be included. The proposal will be reviewed on the basis of the **review criteria** in the NOFO.

B. Program Dates

The Study of the U.S. Institutes for Scholars should be approximately 44 days in length (including arrival and departure days). All Institutes will take place in summer 2017, please propose dates that work for your institution. To ensure adequate time for the award recipient to make pre-program arrangements, ECA will make every effort to award the approved cooperative agreement in a timely fashion, pending availability of funds.

C. Program Administration

Each proposal should discuss the award recipient's capacity to successfully manage international exchange programs, including institutional strengths such as faculty, libraries, relevant departments, and major administrative units. Proposals should include a staffing pattern that details how staff will share responsibilities.

The award recipient must designate an **academic director** at each Institute who will be present throughout the program in its entirety to ensure the continuity, coherence, and integration of all aspects of the academic program, including the study tour. The academic director will plan and implement the program, oversee its day-to-day management, and monitor program participants. Also, the academic director should regularly address the participants to ensure continuity, coherence, and integration of all aspects of the Institute.

During the initial academic session, the academic director should provide participants with a concise overview of the Institute program, including its principal objectives and major themes. This part of the program should introduce participants to the academic disciplines most germane to the Institute's thematic focus, survey the major schools of thought and interpretation, and examine current debates within the disciplines. For this reason, it is important that the program's academic director be a scholar in the Institute's governing discipline.

In addition, an **administrative director** or **coordinator** must be assigned to oversee all support services, including supervision of the program participants and budgetary, logistical, reporting, and other administrative arrangements. Typically the administrative director also serves as ECA's primary point of contact. Other staff may be designated as appropriate. Graduate student assistants may be employed to carry out clerical duties and to assist with the day-to-day concerns and needs of participants, but should not be the principal point of contact for participants' administrative concerns.

All award recipients are required to send at least the administrative director (but may also send the academic director) to a briefing in Washington, D.C., tentatively scheduled for April 2017.

D. Participants

Scholar Institute participants will consist of up to 18 experienced foreign scholars and university faculty and

practitioners whose professional assignments require significant knowledge of their particular field of U.S. studies. Participants will be drawn from all regions of the world and will be fluent or have advanced proficiency in English. They will be seeking to increase their knowledge of American life in order to enhance their professional knowledge and scholarship and to improve courses they may teach on the United States in universities and other educational, training, and research institutions abroad.

Participants may come from educational institutions where the study of the United States is relatively well-developed, or they may be pioneers in this field within their home institutions. Some participants may have had sustained professional contact with U.S. scholars and scholarship, but likely will have had limited prior study and travel experience in the United States. Participants will be varied in terms of age, professional position, and travel experience abroad. In all cases, participants will be accomplished scholars or practitioners who will be prepared to participate in an intellectually rigorous academic seminar that offers a collegial atmosphere conducive to the exchange of ideas.

Award recipients will NOT participate in the selection of candidates. U.S. embassies, consulates, and Fulbright Commissions will identify and nominate participants. ECA will make the final selections. Every effort will be made to select a balanced mix of male and female participants. A final list of participants will be sent to award recipients prior to the start of the Institute. Recipients should provide participants with pre-departure orientation materials at least six weeks prior to the start of the Institute.

E. Academic Residency Program

The Institute should include a four-week academic residency component. The academic residency component should be a specially designed and well-integrated seminar that imaginatively combines lectures, panels, seminar discussions, readings, debates, site visits, and regional travel into a coherent program. It must not replicate an existing lecture course, survey, or graduate seminar designed for American degree candidates.

Applicant institutions must provide a comprehensive **20 page narrative** describing the program objectives. There also should be **calendar or itinerary** of all program activities. The program description in the narrative and itinerary should be supported by a **bibliography** and a **syllabus** that indicates the subject of each class session and explains how assigned readings and other materials support the session. The readings should relate directly to the Institute theme. Course presenters should represent diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, and occupational fields on the topics and issues to be explored. In addition to host institution faculty and other professionals (e.g., in government, media, religious, and civic organizations) in the geographic region of the Institute, presenters should include outstanding scholars and other professional experts from throughout the United States, as appropriate.

Early in the program, participants should have a formal opportunity to present or discuss their own research interests, work environments, and/or other educational issues in their home countries. The audience for these discussions should include other participants, host faculty, American peers, program presenters, and other interested parties.

All sessions throughout each Institute should allot sufficient time for a collegial exchange of views among participants, lecturers, and panelists. Discussion should be encouraged not only through question and answer sessions but also through organized debates, roundtables, and other fora that allow participants to actively

engage with presenters and each other on the ideas being presented.

In order to give participants a multi-dimensional view of U.S. society and institutions, organizers are expected to invite prominent individuals as guest speakers. This should include relevant professionals and practitioners outside the host institution such as experts from government, the media, think tanks, professional and cultural organizations, and community groups who can bring a special perspective to the issues being discussed. Efforts should be made to maximize interaction between participants and presenters both during and outside of each classroom session. Separate budget items (e.g. honorarium, per diem, travel) may be included for this purpose, per attached sample budget.

F. Study Tour

All programs should include an integrated study tour of up to two weeks. Ideally, the study tour should include travel to another region of the United States outside of the host institution. It should complement and reinforce the academic residency portion of the Institute and should include a program in Washington, D.C. All programs must include a half day debriefing session at the Department of State, which will be programmed by ECA/A/E/USS staff. The trip to Washington, D.C. should also involve substantive briefings by professionals from relevant U.S. government agencies, public organizations, and private institutions. If appropriate, the study tour segment may be interspersed with the residency portion of the program, though the total time allotted for the study tour should not exceed two weeks.

The study tour must be arranged and conducted by the academic director and principal project staff. Staff taking part should be identified in the proposal to the greatest extent possible. Staff escorts traveling on the study tour must have demonstrated qualifications to perform this service. The proposal must clearly specify the study tour cities or other destinations to be visited, as well as the specific sites. Day trips or optional weekend excursions to various local and nearby locations are encouraged. The study tour should include travel to not more than two additional regions of the United States, one of which should be distinctly different in geography and culture from that of the host institution. Site visits and presentations included in the study tour must relate to the Institute's academic objectives and subject matter.

If the Washington, D.C. visit or any other study tour city coincides with the end of the program, the host institution may wish to allow participants to leave for their home countries directly from that site, without returning to the host institution. Such planning also might serve to reduce domestic travel costs.

Please note: The Study of the U.S. Branch may request that the award recipient modify the academic residency and/or study tour. Similarly, the award recipient, in consultation with the Study of the U.S. Branch, may also wish to make program modifications.

G. Independent Research/Free Time

The Institute should provide opportunities for limited but well-directed independent research. Participants should have the equivalent of up to one day a week (excluding weekends) to pursue individual research interests, curriculum development projects, or to catch up on assigned readings. Host institution faculty from departments related to the participants' scholarly interests should be available to offer advice on their individual research projects, to help facilitate their access to resources, and to act as peer mentors as appropriate. Given

the likely demands of the Institute schedule, participants will be made aware that opportunities for extensive research will be limited.

Participants should have sufficient free time outside the academic sessions to pursue individual interests, such as socializing with U.S. peers, exercising, and relaxing. Award recipient(s) should provide full access to library facilities, local and national periodicals, radio and television, and computers with internet access. Participants should also have opportunities to attend cultural events, such as concerts, sporting events, and formal or informal gatherings of ordinary Americans from a variety of ethnic, social, and professional backgrounds.

H. Logistical Considerations

The proposal should discuss your institution's and your sub-award recipients' capacities to successfully manage these international exchange programs and should include institutional strengths, such as faculty, libraries, relevant departments, and major administrative units.

- **Housing and meal arrangements** are an important dimension of program planning and must be discussed in detail in the proposal. In general, the quality of housing should be equivalent to what senior U.S. faculty would regard as acceptable accommodations were they to spend extended time on campus as guests of the university. Housing may be in faculty residences, graduate dormitories, or other suitable locations. Walking distance to daily classes should be taken into account, as well as accommodations for participants with disabilities. When possible, each participant should have a private bedroom during the residency portion, and no participant should be asked to share a bathroom with more than one or two others. Accommodations should respect each participant's privacy and comfort, and be conducive to study and relaxation. If possible, participants should have access to kitchen facilities in their own rooms or in a common area. A combination of a cash allowance for food and a cafeteria meal plan is strongly recommended to permit participants to cook or eat at local restaurants. In many cases, participants may experience difficulties with American eating customs due to religious or other dietary restrictions, cultural differences, and availability of familiar foods. Institute staff should be prepared to discuss such problems with the participants and seek solutions. Institute staff should consider conducting a pre-survey of participant dietary and/or religious needs in order to better accommodate those needs. To the extent permitted by budget limitations, participants should receive up to the U.S. government per diem rate for meals and incidental expenses at the various program locales. See <http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem> for current U.S. government per diem rates.
- **Pre-departure materials** should be available to participants via an Institute website or email at least six weeks before the start of the program. For participants who do not have Internet access, the host institution should make arrangements to send hard copies of these materials by express mail to the U.S. Embassy or directly to the participants, as appropriate. Program websites should be updated regularly to provide changes in the program schedule, readings, photos of Institute activities, and other useful information.
- **An administrative orientation** to the United States and to the host campus for the participants should address administrative details of the program, identify campus and local resources, review safety and security procedures, and provide general information that will facilitate the participants' adjustment to

daily life in a new cultural environment. Important topics will be security, medical issues, and availability of foods to which participants are accustomed or which meet specific dietary requirements.

- **An academic orientation** should provide participants with a concise overview of the program, including principal objectives and major themes. The academic director should also use this opportunity to discuss guidelines for participation and encourage active participation by all class members, respect for the views of other participants, concise comments and questions that keep the participants on-topic, and other ground rules that will promote effective class discussion throughout the program.
- **Opening and closing events** (e.g., luncheon, dinner or reception) formal opening and closing events (e.g. luncheon, dinner, or reception) should be planned. Successful events of this type typically include representatives from the college/university community as well as individuals from the larger community. These events should serve to welcome/bid farewell to participants as well as offer participants the opportunity to share about their research and/or culture.
- **Access to resources** should be arranged, including campus libraries, computer and internet facilities, on-campus disability and counseling resources, local and national newspapers and periodicals, as well as radio and television. A formal orientation to library services should be conducted during the first week of the program, and computer training and technical support should be provided for those participants who require it.
- **Evaluations** should be conducted on a regular basis to ensure that academic, administrative, and personal problems are acted upon promptly. At the conclusion of the Institute, a formal evaluation session should permit participants to comment on all aspects of the program.

I. Fostering Mutual Understanding

ECA's mission is to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries by means of educational and cultural exchange that assist in the development of peaceful relations. Proposals should clearly demonstrate plans for structured and unstructured interaction between participants and Americans. Where feasible, interactions should allow for participants to exchange views with Americans, not just learn from American hosts, speakers, and presenters. Opportunities for participants to share their research and culture with Americans can take many forms including, but not limited to, discussion sessions, conferences, receptions, poster sessions, peer mentoring programs, individual consultations with relevant academics, holiday celebrations, international pot lucks, cultural festivals, and host family experiences.

J. Alumni Outreach/Follow-On Activities

Proposals should provide plans for continued follow-on activity (with minimal ECA support) that ensures that ECA-supported programs are not isolated events. Proposed follow-on activities for alumni must reflect the goals and objectives of the program and must contribute to ECA's mission to foster mutual understanding

among the people of other countries and the people of the United States. The proposal should include an outline of follow-on alumni programming (including a timeline), information on how it will be coordinated with existing alumni efforts, and a description of how long-term linkages with alumni will be fostered and maintained. Examples of successful past follow-on activities include, but are not limited to, structured mentoring programs, small grant competitions, alumni reunions or workshops, monthly web discussions, reverse exchanges, cooperative publications by participants and their American peers, and distance learning opportunities for alumni. Applicants should incorporate the online community on the International Exchange Alumni website (Alumni.State.Gov) into their alumni outreach plans.

Follow-on activities should be well developed, but also remain flexible enough to allow for changes based on the needs of the participants. Alumni activities should be financed using the line item budgeted for follow-on activities as well as significant cost-sharing by the applicant organization.

Please refer to the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for additional information.

III. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the **review criteria** set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

NOTE: Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items under the section headings in the GrantSolutions Application Checklist. All documents should be appropriately and clearly titled.

Online Forms

- SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance”
- SF-424A, “Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs”
- SF-424B, “Assurances – Non-Construction Programs”
- Include other attachments, if applicable, such as indirect agreements, form 990, SF-LLL, etc.

Program Narrative

- Executive Summary (One page)

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Name of organization/participating institutions
2. Beginning and ending dates of the program
3. Proposed theme
4. Nature of activity
5. Funding level requested from ECA, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources
6. Scope and Goals
 - a. Number and description of participants
 - b. Wider audience benefiting from program (overall impact)
 - c. Geographic diversity of program, both U.S. and overseas
 - d. Fields covered
 - e. Anticipated results (short and long-term)

- **Narrative**

In 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages and size twelve Times New Roman font, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below.

1. Vision (statement of need, objectives, goals, benefits)
2. Participating Organizations
3. Program Activities (advertisement, recruitment, orientation, academic component, cultural program, participant monitoring)
4. Program Evaluation
5. Follow-on
6. Project Management
7. Work Plan/Time Frame

Additional Information to be Submitted

- **Detailed Budget, Summary Budget, and Budget Narrative**

All budget guidelines must be followed. The budget should indicate any cost sharing in the form of in-kind or cash contributions to the program from sources other than the Department of State. See standard guidelines (PSI) in the Solicitation Package for information on cost sharing and the cost of audits.

A sample budget is provided as an excel document download as part of the application package for this solicitation. You may request this budget template by contacting José Marrero, at MarreroJA@state.gov; 202-632-3337. Please note there are five tabs in this document, the Sample Budget Instructions, the Total Cost by Grant Category, the Summary Budget, the Admin Detailed Budget, and the Program Detailed Budget. Applicants must complete tabs 2-5. The sample budget includes an explanation of specific budget categories and line items. Unless otherwise indicated, each of the line items should appear in the proposed budget. You are urged to be as detailed and specific as possible, adding line items if needed.

Please be sure to include a Summary Budget on a separate page before the Detailed Budgets. The Summary Budget should clearly indicate the number of program participants and provide an overall unit cost per participant, as well as a unit cost breakdown by program and administrative costs. A sample of this format is provided on the third tab of the sample budget. Please note, the summary budget includes estimated cost projections for the non-competitive continuations of the award. You are not required to provide a detailed budget for the subsequent years until ECA decides to exercise the non-competitive continuation.

Following the Detailed Budget, please include a Budget Narrative that concisely explains how costs were calculated and the rationale for including them in the budget. Please make note of the following in the Budget Narrative:

- If you do not have an established indirect cost rate agreement, please explain what costs are excluded when calculating the Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) base in accordance with 2 CFR 200.68 and 2 CFR 200.414.
- List and explain the participant support costs.
- State if the above two questions are part of your organization's existing policies and if they are consistently applied in all budgets throughout your organization.

Applicant institutions should attempt to maximize cost-sharing throughout the program by enlisting the support of the U.S. private sector, including foundations and corporations. ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets and participant numbers based on program needs and the availability of U.S. Government funding.

- Calendar of activities/itinerary
- Letters of endorsement
- Resumes and CVs (resumes of all new staff should be included in the submission; no resume should exceed two pages.)
- First Time Applicant Attachments (if applicable).

Please note: All applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

- Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.
- Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

As part of final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers,

trustees, and key employees), as well as the one- page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The NOFO indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which proposals must be submitted. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline. For further information regarding this program or the competition, call José Marrero at (202) 632-3337, Study of the U.S. Branch; email: MarreroJA@state.gov.